



# Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

## Issue 107: 21 February 2025

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## National news

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### National Cancer Plan

The Government and NHS England are working together on a new **National Cancer Plan**.

To help shape this plan, the Government has launched a **Call for Evidence**, open until **29 April**. You can participate by completing the [online survey](#).

This follows previous calls for evidence, including the [10-Year Cancer Plan \(2022\)](#) and the [Major Conditions Strategy](#). The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published a [summary of past submissions](#), which will be considered in developing the new plan. The Cancer Plan team will also review relevant responses from the **10-Year Health Plan**.

If you've contributed before, you may want to reflect on any changes since your last submission and provide additional input.

The plan's development will be guided by a **Clinical Advisory Group**, led by **Professor Peter Johnson**, and NHS England's **Patient and Public Voices Forum**.

For questions, contact [Deborah.Robinson5@nhs.net](mailto:Deborah.Robinson5@nhs.net)

### **Key Competencies for Level 4 Psychological Care in Cancer**

A [Competency framework for practitioner psychologists working in adult cancer care](#)

has been produced by the British Psychological Society and should be taken into account in Alliances' planning and

ongoing delivery of transformation of psychosocial support.

The framework includes competencies for psychological work in palliative and end of life care for people with cancer.

### **Updates to the SACT Treatment Dashboard: Variation by Trust and Cancer Alliance in England**

In August 2023, a dashboard was launched to track the time patients wait for SACT drugs after approval by NICE for NHS use. Updated monthly, it now includes data on 90 indications from the [NICE Cancer Drugs Fund \(CDF\)](#) list.

[The TTFT dashboard](#) has been expanded to show results at the trust and cancer alliance level, in addition to the national summary. Previously, this detail was only on the CancerStats2 (CS2) platform. Users can now filter by trust, cancer alliance, drug, cancer type, and drugs previously available through the CDF or Early Access to Medicines Scheme (EAMS). The data highlights variations in access to new SACT drugs across England.

Going forward, the TTFT dashboard will be updated annually, and the CS2 dashboard will be archived. This ensures all data is available in one place and publicly accessible.

For feedback or questions, contact [ndrs.datasets@nhs.net](mailto:ndrs.datasets@nhs.net)

### **New Report Highlights Digital Technology to Improve Cancer Pathways**

A new report by Public Policy Projects (PPP) and Civica emphasises the need for faster integration of digital technology to enhance cancer pathways. Titled *‘How can digital technology improve pathways for patients and clinicians, build capacity, reduce backlogs, and ultimately improve patient outcomes?’*, the report is based on a round-table discussion with experts from various fields, including clinical oncologists, cancer alliance representatives, and clinical nurse specialists.

With increasing cancer incidence in England, NHS diagnostic and treatment capacities will face more pressure. The report suggests that pathways should be critically evaluated to ensure they are efficient, sustainable, and equitable for all patients. It advocates for a transformation in cancer services and highlights key enablers such as health literacy, patient-centric care, and better use of digital tools.

Key recommendations include:

- The cancer plan should define “what good looks like” and promote best practices across tumour sites.
- Implement patient feedback tools like ePROMs and PSFUs, focusing on improving patient experience.
- Explore the use of asynchronous MDTs.
- Adopt digital automation tools to reduce administrative burdens.
- Engage patients during waiting times with information on what to expect and health literacy.
- Address over-piloting by establishing a central testing site for innovations.
- Provide better guidance on frailty in patient referrals and consider self-referral mechanisms to reduce healthcare access inequalities.

Read the full report [here](#).

## Encouraging young people to catch up on missed HPV vaccine

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is urging young people to get the [HPV vaccine when offered in schools](#).

**Uptake is improving, but it's still below pre-pandemic levels of around 90%.** If anyone missed the vaccine, they can contact their GP to catch up until their 25th birthday.

This vaccine is crucial in preventing HPV-related cancers, and the push for higher uptake remains important to safeguard future health.

Please share information and advice on this [Poster](#) or [Leaflet \(Easy Read Braille, BSL, Large Print, Audio and other languages here\)](#)

### **CAN-Empower: Emotional needs digital support tool**

The CentRIC (Centre for Psychosocial Research) team at Southampton University, in collaboration with Macmillan, has developed **CAN-EMPOWER**, an evidence-based, co-created resource to help people living with cancer manage their emotional needs. This resource was created with input from patients, cancer survivors, friends, family, and healthcare professionals.

CAN-EMPOWER offers:

- Insights into the psychological and emotional challenges of living with cancer.
- Coping tools and techniques that others have found helpful.

The website is divided into three sections:

1. **Emotional Responses to Cancer:** Explores the psychological and emotional challenges faced by many people with cancer.
2. **General Coping Techniques:** Provides advice and activities related to general concerns, such as leading a healthier lifestyle.
3. **Targeted Coping Techniques:** Offers specific guidance on managing particular challenges, such as difficult thoughts.

Visit the site at: [Can-Empower - Home](#)

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## **Alliance updates**

### **Tumour markers guidance for primary care**

Please view the [most recent version here](#)

### **Mark Foulkes, MBE**

Mark Foulkes is set to receive his MBE for cancer nursing at Buckingham Palace on 18 February. Mark, the Lead Cancer Nurse at Royal Berkshire Hospital, is also the TVCA Personalized Care Lead for Secondary Care. This well-deserved honour recognises his exceptional contribution to cancer care.

Congratulations from us all Mark!

### **Aria Upgrade Delay - New Dates and Important Information**

Due to necessary testing, including the delayed laboratory interface, the Aria upgrade scheduled for 28 February to 3 March has been postponed. The new planned upgrade date is now **28 to 31 March**, with confirmation of the exact timing closer to the date.

### **Key Information:**

- Aria will be unavailable from **midday on Friday, 28 March** and will reopen at **midday on Monday, 31 March**.
- **Prescriptions for patients requiring treatment between 28 March and 1 April** must be prescribed in advance to ensure they are screened and printed by a pharmacist before the system closes at midday on 28 March.
- All prescriptions for this period must be **printed or saved as a PDF** before 28 March.
- Any treatments given during the closure should be recorded on the printed prescription and updated retrospectively on Aria.

Please plan your treatments and schedules accordingly to accommodate this downtime.

Further updates and confirmation will be provided as the upgrade date approaches. Apologies for any inconvenience caused and thank you for your understanding.

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## Place updates

### Healthier Oxford Roadshow

Beaumont PCN are running **FREE community health event** to help individuals discover how the NHS can support their well-being.

**Date:** Saturday 15 March

**Time:** 10am - 1pm

**Location:** The Assembly Room, Oxford Town Hall, OX1 1BX

This event provides patients and local community members access to expert advice from NHS staff and GPs on a range of health

topics, including:

- Losing weight
- Stopping smoking

- Improving mental health
- Cancer screening
- Reducing the risk of developing diabetes
- Exercise
- NHS app & health checks

Please share this event with colleagues and patients and encourage them to attend for valuable support and guidance to improve their health.

[Further info here](#)

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### **Training and events**

#### **TYA Cancer: Working Together Engagement & Education Event,**

Education and Engagement Event for the MDT, focused on collaborating for the TYA cancer patient.

This event is specifically for those working in TYA cancer within the Thames Valley and Wessex ODN region.

**Date:** 20 March

**Time:** 9am - 4pm

**Venue:** Apollo Hotel Basingstoke, Basingstoke, RG24 9NU

The event will cover topics such as:

- Fertility Preservation
- Aftercare & Late Effects
- Holistic TYA Care (including Youth Support Workers, Activity Coordinators, and psychological support)
- Insights from Designated Hospitals
- Access to Clinical Trials

Your ticket includes: Refreshments - Hot lunch - Free parking

Spaces are limited, so book now: [Event Booking Page here](#)

## **What's next for prostate cancer research?**

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, with 55,000 new UK cases annually. Localised cancer (confined to the prostate) often allows for long-term survival.

Guided by the NIHR ProtecT trial, national guidelines recommend active surveillance, surgery, or radiotherapy for lower-risk cases.

**Date:** 12 March

**Time:** 1pm

**Online:** via Zoom.

### **This webinar explores three major NIHR trials on optimising treatment:**

- Can regular MRI scans improve active surveillance?
- Is targeting only the cancerous prostate area as effective as treating the whole prostate?
- Does removing lymph nodes alongside the prostate benefit high-risk cases?

Hear from leading researchers on what we know—and don't—about treating localised prostate cancer. Presentations will be followed by a Q&A.

- **Speakers:**

Archana Gopalakrishnan, Imperial College London

Richard Bryant, University of Oxford

Krishna Narahari, University Hospital of Wales

To register your interest please visit the website here: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

## **MDT Reform Education Event – Greater Manchester Cancer Academy.**

**This is an interactive event focused on educating MDT teams on the progress and impact of the MDT Reform Project.**

**Date:** Tuesday, 11 March 2025

**Time:** 9:30am - 1:30pm

**Venue:** King's House Conference Centre, Sidney Street, Manchester, M1 7HB

**Suitable For:** Pathway Board Members, Multi-Disciplinary Team Members, and Cancer Managers.

**Event Information:** A morning of informative sessions and networking opportunities focused on the ongoing Cancer MDT Reform work within Greater Manchester. We will be sharing the work completed to date and highlighting the positive impact this has had on patient care.

To secure your ticket, visit the [website here](#)

### **Acute Oncology Education and Transformation Phase 1 Launch Event**

This event will cover key updates on Acute Oncology, including the launch of Phase 1 of the Acute Oncology Transformation. You'll hear about the work of the GM Cancer Acute Oncology Pathway Board and the implementation of daily MDTs across Greater Manchester Trusts.

It's ideal for healthcare professionals working in Acute Oncology Services including medical staff, operational managers, and cancer managers.

**Date:** 21 March

**Time:** 9.30am - 4.30pm

**Venue:** The Nest, 6 Claverton Road, Manchester, M23 9SP

To book a ticket visit the [website here](#)

### **Birmingham City University new Applied Cancer Practice Course now open**

Birmingham City University's Applied Cancer Practice Course is now open for applications. All modules are delivered online and align with the ACCEND framework.

Available courses:

- MSc, Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, and BSc in Applied Cancer Practice
- Level 6 and Level 7 modules

Study routes include:

- Cancer
- Haematological Cancer
- Acute Oncology
- Combinations of Cancer, Haematological Cancer, and Acute Oncology

Modules offered:

- Foundations and Fundamentals of Cancer, Haematological Cancer, Acute Oncology, Stem Cell Transplant, and Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment (SACT)
- Professional Development and Clinical Leadership in Cancer Care (Level 6 & 7)

For more details and to apply, visit the [Birmingham City University website](#) or contact: [appliedcancerpractice@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:appliedcancerpractice@bcu.ac.uk)

### **End of life care and pancreatic cancer**

Join **Pancreatic Cancer UK** for a FREE, virtual educational session focused on end-of-life care in pancreatic cancer.

Hear from **Dr. Margred Capel**, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, and **Catriona Seed**, Education Lead & Clinical Nurse Specialist, as they share practical tips and guidance on how to best support your patients during this crucial time.

**Date:** 5 March

**Time:** 9am - 11am

**Online:** via Zoom Webinar

This session is an opportunity to gain valuable insights and improve your understanding of end-of-life care in pancreatic cancer.

[Register your interest here](#)

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**Patient facing resources**

## **February: Oesophageal Cancer Awareness Month**

Also known as gullet cancer, it is the **eighth most common cancer worldwide**.

**GatewayC** has a free course to assist primary care staff in effectively assessing and managing patients with symptoms potentially indicative of oesophageal cancer. Find it here: [Oesophageal Cancer - GatewayC](#).

Gastro and oesophageal cancer are also the topics of a GatewayC `GPs Talk Cancer' podcast. Weight loss, difficulty swallowing and abdominal pain are some of the key areas covered. This episode also covers Barrett's oesophagus, the impact of radiotherapy from other cancer groups and key risk factors - [GatewayC GPs Talk Cancer gastro and OG cancer](#).

**The charity, Heartburn UK**, has patient information leaflets and posters raising awareness about signs and symptoms of oesophageal cancer. Find them here: [Heartburn UK patient information](#)

## **Breast Screening Awareness Campaign**

NHS England's national breast screening awareness campaign starts from **17 February and runs through to the end of March**.

The campaign aims to encourage first time invitees and low participation cohorts to attend their screening appointment when invited by their local programme.

You can see some of the social ads live on our social channels with the strapline: *'save the date; it could save your life'*

## **National Cancer Clinical Nurse Day**

National Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Day is a social media awareness day dedicated to celebrating the crucial role of the cancer nursing workforce. It

highlights their daily contributions to supporting cancer patients and health systems across the UK.

The Cancer CNS workforce is facing significant challenges. With the growing demand for cancer services, the need for more CNSs is urgent. The National Cancer Workforce Plan (2017) and NHS England's People Plan (2020) both pledged to grow the cancer workforce, but action is still needed. Additionally, 18% of the current CNS workforce is older than the average age for nurses, and 30% are set to retire in the next eight years. This makes initiatives like National Cancer CNS Day increasingly important.

National Cancer CNS Day is on **14 March** and celebrates the vital work CNSs do and raise awareness about the ongoing challenges they face. It also aims to debunk myths surrounding cancer nursing and highlight the need for more support and investment in the workforce.

**Nearly 3.5 million people in the UK are living with cancer**, and CNSs are on the frontlines, helping patients navigate the impact of cancer on their lives. On National Cancer CNS Day, we encourage everyone to show their support for these professionals who make a significant difference in patient outcomes.

Join the celebration by using the hashtag **#NationalCancerCNSDay** on social media and help spread the word about the importance of Cancer CNSs.

More information and resources will be available as the day approaches.

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## **Vacancies**

### **Treatment and Personalised Care programme manager**

TVCA are looking for a Programme Manager to join our innovative and dynamic team. The successful candidate will collaborate with the Clinical Lead for Cancer Nursing and

AHPs to deliver projects focused on personalised cancer care and treatment variation, including the Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatment (SACT) project.

**Closing date for applications is Monday 24 February**

View more and how to apply: [Vacancies - thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk](https://www.thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk/vacancies)

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If you have a TVCA Bulletin article you would like to share, just get in touch with us at: [bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net](mailto:bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net)

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